

deactivated to release a wafer or interleaf.

Claim 4. (Currently amended). A vacuum pickup device as claimed in Claim 4 7 including a housing for a motor to selectively activate an impeller disposed in a compartment of the housing, said housing having at least a portion spaced upwardly from the top face of the paddle so that air drawn through the orifice in the paddle is directed through the gap to discharge over the top surface of the paddle creating the second vacuum at the periphery of the paddle.

Claim 5. (Original). A vacuum pickup device as claimed in Claim 4 wherein the compartment for the impeller has a downwardly and outwardly flared peripheral side wall which directs flow of incoming air through the gap and over the top face of the paddle.

Claim 6. (Canceled without prejudice).

Claim 7 (new). A vacuum pickup device for handling semiconductor wafers and interleaf separators comprising:

- a) a generally flat paddle member having a pickup face with a peripheral edge and a planar top surface,
- b) means including a fan impeller for drawing air through an intake orifice in the bottom pick-up face of the paddle which creates a first vacuum and a primary lifting force of a predetermined magnitude on the pickup face and directing the air over the top surface thereby creating an additional secondary vacuum at the periphery of the paddle to provide an additional secondary lifting force gently supporting the wafer on the pickup face whereby a low vacuum is distributed over a wide area to provide a good uniform gentle more even lifting force.

Claim 8 (new). A vacuum pickup device for handling semiconductor wafers and

interleaf separators comprising:

- a) a generally flat paddle member having a pickup face with a peripheral edge and a planar top surface,
- b) means defining an intake orifice in the paddle and a pattern of channels in the pickup face emanating from the orifice to funnel air to a primary vacuum zone and define a large lift area on the pickup face;
- c) means including a fan impeller for drawing air through an intake orifice in the bottom pick-up face of the paddle which creates a first vacuum and a primary lifting force of a predetermined magnitude on the pickup face and directing the air over the top surface thereby creating an additional secondary vacuum at the periphery of the paddle to provide an additional secondary lifting force gently supporting the wafer on the pickup face whereby a low vacuum is distributed over a wide area to provide a good uniform gentle more even lifting force.